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RUEKDIA/DIA WASHDC
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RUFOADA/JAC MOLESWORTH RAF MOLESWORTH UK

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DOE FOR CAROLYN GAY

E.O. 12958: DECL: 02/15/2018
TAGS: [PNAT](#) [PREL](#) [PGOV](#) [NI](#)
SUBJECT: DEMARCHE DELIVERED ON KOSOVO RECOGNITION

REF: A. SECSTATE 16319
[1](#)B. SECSTATE 13716
[1](#)C. SECSTATE 15111
[1](#)D. ABUJA 296

Classified By: Political Counselor Walter Pflaumer for reasons 1.4. (b & d).

[1](#)1. (C) During a wide ranging February 15 discussion on bilateral issues with President Yar'Adua, the Ambassador discussed U.S. support for Kosovo's impending independence, President Bush's plans to recognize Kosovo upon a declaration of independence by its legislature, and stressed USG desire for Nigeria to follow suit. Ambassador stressed Kosovar independence as a victory for democracy and symbol of its progression around the world. Yar'Adua said that after Kosovo's declaration, GON will take time to reflect on the issue and evaluate what is in Nigeria's best interests, taking into account what its neighbors would do. Though he seemed generally positively disposed to recognition, Yar'Adua remained noncommittal.

[1](#)2. (C) Previously, in telcons February 14 with Nigerian National Security Adviser Abdullahi Mukhtar and the Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs Dr. B.K. Kaigama (ref ??) who was acting Foreign Minister (FM) in the absence of the FM and Minister of State for Foreign Affairs, Ambassador was told that Nigeria will likely follow a common African Union position once it is established. Separately, on February 13 Poloff delivered demarche per STATE 13716 to Minister Counselor Maureen Labiran (ref D) in the European Affairs Division of the Nigerian Ministry of Foreign Affairs who also declared GON intention to support a common AU policy.

[1](#)3. (C) COMMENT: We do not see President Yar'Adua's caution and the GON's position of deferring to an AU common position as opposition to the recognition of Kosovo, but rather an indication of his/its current preoccupation with domestic issues. GON focus in the near term is on impending electoral tribunal decisions (particularly that involving the President), major legislation on power sector reform, and substantial political maneuvering within the ruling PDP party in advance of its local caucuses and national convention. Yar'Adua's orientation at the moment is inward looking, and foreign policy issues seem to be less of a priority for him than the previous Administration. Nevertheless, as an influential member of the African Union, post will continue to lobby for GON recognition of Kosovo. END COMMENT.
SANDERS